

## Quick With His Gun.

Unexpected Thing That Happened in a River Poker Game.

(New York Sun.)

"It ain't no unusual thing for to have some totally unexpected thing happen on a river boat," said old Caleb Mix, the veteran barkeeper on the Mississippi river packet Natchez, "an' sometimes the unexpected is full o' surprise for all hands. I've knowed it to be so when a biter bust in the old days, right in the midst of a excitin' race, with the two boats side by side, an' one o' em a blame sight nearer the bank than was any ways comfortable, an' the other boat crowdin' her higher yet. Such times they is usual, consid'able excitement, an' a biter bustin' in ain't cal'lated to soothe nobody's feelin' none."

"Bilers don't bust nowadays likes they used to, though I reckon, maybe, they build 'em better'n they did, for one thing, an' they don't use 'em the same, for another."

"Before the war there was racin' on the river pretty nigh all the time, an' 'twasn't no usual thing for a cap'n to take all the chances they was to take, rather'n to see the other boat get ahead. I've heerd stories of cap'ns that 'd burn up their cargoes, 'n set niggers on the safety valve, ruther'n to be beat, but I never seed nothin' quite like that."

"There was excitement enough, an' bilers enough busted, without that, but I don't say it didn't happen. Some o' the river men them days was reckless enough to do 'most anything."

"Whatever warn't likely to happen on a trip up an' down the river generally did happen, whether it was a impromptu duel on the upper deck, or a fight on board. You never knowed whether it would be you or the other feller that wouldn't finish the trip alive, an' whatever else you might miss on a packet river you warn't likely to miss excitement."

"There was one trip the old Louisiana made from Memphis to New Orleans in the spring o' '91, though, that held the record for a good many years, an' so far as I know, holds it yet. There were more devilment on board them times inside o' a month, an' lookin' back at it now, I ain't surprised at nuthin' but the fact that the old boat finished the trip on top o' the water."

"Pears like she'd oughter have struck a snag, or caught fire on the way, so to kind o' round things up like, but she didn't."

"The trouble began afore we left Memphis, on the main deck. The niggers was trouble some, an' had been for some time."

"You see, the war was comin' on, an' there was any o' God's quantity of Abolitionists tryin' to stir 'em up. We kept a lookout for 'em as well as we could, an' when we'd catch one it 'd be all day with him, but every one we'd hang, or throw overboard, 'd seem to leave two in his place."

"Somehow they'd get hold o' the roustabouts on the Louisiana, while we was a leadin' up at Memphis, an' the crazy fools got it into their heads that they'd seize the boat an' run her n' north, where they'd stand a chance o' goin' free. Course they had as good a chance as a bag o' feathers in a blast furnace, but they tried it."

"One powerful big black nigger hit the mate back o' the ear with a balestick, an' four or five others made a rush for him to throw him overboard. The Lord only knows what they expected, to do next, but they warn't no next."

"A little fellow from Texas stood on the upper deck that was a crack shot, an' he had his gun out an' shot three o' 'em dead in their tracks afore the cap'n seed what was goin' on. As he seed it he jumped in an' ten minutes later every live nigger on board was in irons."

"We left that crew in the Memphis calaboose an' started with a new one the same evenin'. The mate was only stunned, not killed, an' he made it mighty pleasant for them other niggers for three or four days, but then there was a game o' poker started in the saloon after supper the first night that finished up in as fine a mix-up as I ever see. There was a couple o' New Orleans sports, an' he came up with us on the last trip lookin' for game."

"They found it, too, for they was playin' all the way up the river with some young bucks that had more money than they had knowledge of the game, an' they made consid'able more'n expenses, besides what they did in Memphis, where I heard tell what fair."

"They'd started a game with a couple o' players from Mississippi, an' after they'd played a spell a little saved-off from Cairo, he said he was sick an' he'd take a hand if they warn't no objections, which there warn't none, and he bought a stack. He had good hands, too, right from the jump, an' 'twasn't nothin' but a hand o' fate afore he was three or four hundred to the good."

"I reckon they were straight play enough, for the two gamblers were on to all the tricks o' the game, well enough to keep him from tryin' anything crooked, but they did see he was pretty wise his own self, an' I notice that they was playin' straight, too, I reckon they c'd see 'twasn't no use to do any funny business."

"I were a-watchin' the game an' I seen 'em give each other a look when the little fellow sawed-off opened a pot afore a while which there was about \$30 in it, an' they both come in, the second man raising it \$50. The sawed-off his name was Taylor, an' he seen the take, an' all three took cards."

"Douglas, one o' the New Orleans men, he drawed first an' took two cards. Hopkin's the other fellow he took one, an' Taylor he grinned an' said he reckoned he'd play what he had."

"It was his bet, o' course, an' he shoved up \$100. Douglas he pleaded to study a while an' then he come in. Hopkin's he raised it a hundred an' Taylor come back at him with a hundred more. Then Douglas he kind o' laughed an' he says, 'was layin' for you,' an' he shoved in five hundred, makin' a raise o' two hundred more."

"I seen then that it were the old crisis-cross game, an' the only question for Taylor to consider was whether he'd go his pile or lay down. They did not play table stakes much them days, an' when a man set into a game on the river he generally reckoned on winnin' or losin' broke."

"O' course Hopkin's raised again, an' Taylor he went diggin'. He pulled out seven or eight \$100 bills, an' simply made good, which took \$500 o' it."

"The New Orleans man was out for his blood an' they seemed to think he'd weaken afore his pile was gone, so they both raised again five hundred at a clip, makin' it a thousand more for Taylor to come in, an' thinkin' 't he'd likely lay down in his clothes. But the little fellow was good grit, an' I reckon he knowed what he were up against, for all he says was 't he called for a show for his pile."

"It through the cards into the table. 'I reckon them cards 'd better lay where they are, till we settle this bet,' he said, an' while he was sayin' it he drawed his gun with his other hand."

"Douglas made a grab for the pot, an' Hopkin's drawed his gun at the same instant, but Taylor was too quick for either o' em. He shot Douglas plump through the heart with his left hand an' grabbed Hopkin's wrist with his right, twistin' it so 't Hopkin's gun went flyin' hittin' nobody, as luck would have it."

"Well, o' course, there were all sorts o' confusion then, an' the cap'n come in an' charge o' things. He put Taylor under arrest, as o' course, he had to do, seein' he'd killed a man, but they all hands examined the cards an' seen that Taylor had the winnin' hand, the cap'n told him to scoop the pot, which he did."

"We landed Taylor at Helena, Ark., which were the next stop we made, an' Hopkin's stopped over there, too, sayin' he'd prosecute the man that had killed his pal, but I heard after that Taylor was discharged afore the court had heard the truth, an' him an' Hopkin's had it out on the street aforeward, both o' 'em gettin' shot up some, but neither bein' killed."

"Well it looked like that was excitement enough for one trip, but we had not got to Arkansas City afore there was more poker goin' on an' another shootin' scrape in the saloon that laid out three men, one o' whose didn't have nothin' to do with the game."

"Peared like there was three playin' in an' one was caught palmin' in them things meant shoot in the minute in them days, an' the feller that was caught and the feller that caught him both blazed away an' both got badly wounded. One o' 'em was a westerner, an' the other was a Mississippian, laid up for a month at Vicksburg, where we landed him."

"Nobody cared much about that, for two men that went shootin' at each other to stand for all the chances, but the third feller that didn't have nothin' to do with it was sittin' in a chair across the room readin' a book, an' he never knowed what hit him, an' 't he did seem kind o' hard. His wife that was asleep in her cabin, took on pretty hard about it."

"T'wain on the old Mississippi were tol'able excitin' them days."

### PEARY AND THE NORTH POLE.

Herbert L. Bridgman's Graphic Account of Explorer's Progress.

(Brooklyn Eagle.)

Herbert L. Bridgman, who has made several trips into the Arctic regions as a friend and fellow traveler with Lieutenant Peary in the latter's search for the North pole, last night entertained a large audience in the Metropolitan hall in Berry street with a very interesting and graphically illustrated lecture, which he calls "Peary's Progress to the Pole." This lecture is included in the free public course now being given under the direction of the board of education.

Mr. Bridgman prefaced the lecture with a brief statement of Mr. Peary's plans and of the work of the Peary Arctic club co-operating with him in their expedition. The project for attaining the pole was first submitted to the American Geographical society early in 1897, approved by a special committee, and in 1898 Mr. Peary left the United States to undertake the achievement of his purpose. The Diana, an expedition, a junction with him at Etah, North Greenland, bringing reports of his first year's work, but from the date of his separation from him nothing has been heard except a brief message from Fort Conger, March 31, 1899, announcing that he proposed within the next few days to cross the Greenland ice cap, and proceed north. Like nothing has been heard either from the Peary Arctic club's Windward, which, with Mrs. Peary and Miss Peary on board, left Sydney, C. B., July 21, 1899.

Taking up the story of the cruise of the Erik at her departure from Sydney, New York, July 14, 1899, Mr. Bridgman followed her northward across, via Godhavn and Upernivik, Cape York, through the north waters to a junction in about three weeks with Mr. Peary at Etah where was also found the Windward with Mrs. Peary, Miss Peary, and all on board well. The ship had been imprisoned in the ice on the western coast of Smith sound during the entire winter, and only a month before had extricated herself and crossed over to Ingfield gulf, where during July 25, 1899, were captured. Then the story of Mr. Peary's great work in the spring of 1900 from his own lips was told: how he crossed over from Fort Conger, accompanied by Max Henson, his colored follower, and five Eskimos, and pushed forward along the Greenland coast to its northernmost extremity, passing, May 8, the highest north (83° 45') of Lockwood and Brimard in 1884, and taking up the records from their cairn, of which a copy was deposited at Cape Washington, the point of land seen by Lewis and Clark, and then proceeding still farther on to the extremity of the Greenland archipelago, at 83° 25'. Here Mr. Peary found the coast trending rapidly to the eastward, and therefore, left it, striking out over the sea ice for the pole. Open water and a disintegrated pack a short distance, at 83° 50', compelled him to retrace his steps to the land, whence he again took up his eastward march, continuing on nearly 100 miles farther than Lockwood's farthest, or until he recognized the highland seen by him from Independence bay, which he discovered on his first trip across Greenland in 1892. Retracing his steps along the coast, practically by the same route, Mr. Peary was safely back at Fort Conger by the middle of June, having made one of the most important and successful explorations in history, placing on the highest known land, which is undoubtedly the farthest north in the world. The Greenland problem, wrapped in the mists of a thousand years, had been solved, and which Sir Clements Markham, president of the Royal Geographical society, declares second in importance only to the attainment of the pole itself, specially achieved. The maps of Peary's work, of the evolution of Greenland from the unknown and undetermined boundaries of the middle ages, and the early beginnings of its history, in the times of Hans Egede, the missionary, and of Krantz, the German traveler, were shown, and a clear idea given of the development of the stages by which the great archipelago of the north became definitely known to geography.

Mr. Peary's story of the next summer and of the following winter, which he spent in the Lake Hazen country, fifty or sixty miles to the westward of Fort Conger, living in snow igloos and subsisting on the game of the region, was told, together with his futile attempt to proceed north last spring over the open sea from Cape Hecla, an undertaking which, he said, through the inability of his men and dogs to withstand the ice and arduous struggle. The story of Mrs. Peary's work on the Windward, rebounding on Cape Sabine, within 250 miles of her husband, each ignorant of the other's presence, was also told, and the nar-

raive of the Arctic work given clearly and with much fullness of detail and many interesting incidents. The story of the summer's cruise of the Erik, of the hunting of the walrus in Ingfield gulf and of the deer on the heights surrounding Etah bay, of the tour among the native villages, of the Eskimo life and customs, of the arduous crossing of Smith sound in order to land Mr. Peary at his winter quarters, of the week's battle with the ice, and party on the shore of Herschel bay, were all told with graphic effect and heightened by excellent lantern illustrations. The lecture as a whole gives a lifelike and realistic view of work in the Arctic, together with a clear and intelligent statement of the geographical attainments of Mr. Peary in the ten years which he has spent in explorations.

### A TALK ON EUGENE FIELD.

New Role by Francis Wilson in Aid of a Charity.

(New York Commercial Advertiser.)

Persons who have seen Francis Wilson's grotesque figure and peasant face, and the footlights and heard his croil sayings at the Waldorf-Astoria, yesterday, were surprised to see a scholarly looking, clean-shaven man clad in conventional frock coat. There was nothing theatrical about Mr. Wilson's appearance, and his bearers soon learned that Francis Wilson, the actor, and Francis Wilson, the lecturer, are very different impersonations of the same man.

The occasion was a benefit for the Little Mothers' Aid association, with Mr. Wilson scheduled as the person to read Reminiscences Concerning the Life and Character of Eugene Field. At the start Mr. Wilson declared that Field was, in his mind, one of the greatest of modern poets, and he was thoroughly biased in Field's favor. There is one thing in Field's favor and that is that while, like all poets of childhood, he wrote mainly of "the little mothers," he did not neglect the little fathers. "His songs about boys are pathetic enough to bring honest tears to the eyes of even dishonest politicians," said the actor. Mr. Wilson then told of some of Mr. Field's amusing pranks, some of which, the speaker declared, were yet known to an interested public. Not long before Field's death the poet was in this city, and while there was with "Bill Nye" and James Whitcomb Riley, said he had had a dream the night before. The three men were in a country village. After the play Field said he met a man in the street who heartily shook his hand and added: "Oh, I know you all right, Field, but who're those other fellows?"

Mr. Wilson told of an episode of the early career of the poet. He had been invited to sit on the platform at a public meeting at which Carl Schurz was the star speaker. The presiding officer of the meeting was detained, and Field was asked to introduce the speaker in his "usual inimitable style." Field was utterly unprepared and was a little embarrassed, but he was equal to the occasion. He advanced to the front of the platform and said in a hoarse voice and a strong German accent:

"Ladies and Gentlemen—I am very much sorry that I have a very bad cold by head and am unable to speak, but it gives me very much happiness to introduce mine old but clever friend, Eugene Field, who will now address you."

The audience, Mr. Schurz was so amused that it took him several minutes to compose himself before he could speak. Then the audience saw the joke and roared.

He spoke of Field's influence and personal magnetism, which he employed to excite young men's ambitions. Field took pleasure in discovering and helping these young men, urging them to read and digest the best books by the best authors. Field's work showed many contrasts. His interest never flagged and his humor was as abundant as his modesty. He told many anecdotes about Field, including the following: When the poet was in Denver he was invited out to dinner. The dinner was an expensive affair, and, although in the dead of winter, each guest had before his plate a huge dish of luscious strawberries. Field sadly pushed his away from him. "What's the matter?" inquired the host. "Don't you like strawberries?"

"Yes," responded Field. "But I'm afraid they'll spoil my appetite for prunes."

In closing Mr. Wilson said: "Eugene Field was a man of great heart and soul, as well as a man of infinite tenderness, and the world is better for his having lived."

After Mr. Wilson's talk, Miss Carrie Bridwell of the Metropolitan Opera company sang two of Field's poems, set to music, J. H. Johnson, whose wife is president of the Little Mothers' Aid association, presented Mr. Wilson with a framed manuscript and photograph of Walt Whitman. The hall was crowded, and the affair was a success.

The Little Mothers' Aid association cares for the children of wage-earners who must assume the cares of motherhood while the real mother seeks to earn bread for the family.

### SPURGEON'S CORRECTION.

Change of Illustration to Which Objection Had Been Made.

(Homelike Review.)

One day the mayor of Cambridge, who has tried to cure Mr. Spurgeon's tendencies to sensationalism, inquired of him if he had really told his congregation that, if a thief got into heaven, he would begin picking the angels' pockets.

"Yes, sir," the young preacher replied. "I told the fact, if it were possible for an ungodly man to go to heaven without leaving his nature changed, he would be none the better for being there, and the way to heaven, I said that, were a thief to get in among the glorified, he would remain a thief still, and he would go round the place picking the angels' pockets."

"But, my dear young friend," asked the mayor seriously, "don't you know that the angels haven't any pockets?"

"No, sir," replied young Spurgeon with equal gravity. "I did not know that; but I am glad to be assured of the fact from a striking man who does know. I will take care to put it all right the first opportunity I get."

The next Monday morning Spurgeon walked into the mayor's place of business and said to him cheerfully: "I set that matter right yesterday, sir."

"What matter?" he inquired.

"Why, about the angels' pockets."

"What did you say?"

"Oh, sir, I just told the people I was sorry to say that I had made a mistake the last time I preached to them, but that I had met a gentleman—the mayor of Cambridge—who had assured me that the angels had no pockets, so I did not want anybody to go away with a false notion about heaven. I would, therefore, say that if a thief got among the angels without having his nature changed he would try to steal the feathers out of their wings!"

### A New Way to Raise Money.

(March Ladies' Home Journal.)

Five years ago a picture club was organized in a New England town. Twelve members, six of each sex, were enrolled. Each member owned a camera, or borrowed one, and they agreed that during the summer each would take as many photographs of various spots in the town or its vicinity as possible, and would try to induce others outside of the club to take pictures. The best 100 were selected, made into slides, and an evening selected when, in the town hall, the club showed the pictures on a screen. The admission was fixed at 25 cents. The "picture club exhibition" has now become "the event of the season" in the town. The capacity of the hall is taxed, and the sum of money raised each year is always a handsome one. The money is given to some special town object.

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